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LETTER DATED 2 SEPTEMBER 1998 FROM THE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF AUSTRIA TO THE UNITED NATIONS ADDRESSED TO THE SECRETARY-GENERAL

I have the honour to draw your attention to the statement issued on 2 September 1998 by the Presidency of the European Union on Guinea-Bissau (see annex).

I should be grateful if you would have the text of this letter and its annex circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(Signed) Ernst SUCHARIPA
Permanent Representative of Austria
to the United Nations

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Annex

[Original: English and French]

Statement on Guinea-Bissau by the Presidency of the European Union issued on 2 September 1998

The European Union welcomes the agreement reached on 26 August in Praia, Cape Verde, between the Government of Guinea-Bissau and the self-appointed military junta, transforming the previous truce into a ceasefire. The agreement constitutes a very positive step towards a negotiated solution to the conflict in that country. The European Union therefore urges both parties to abide by it.

The Union welcomes in particular the decision to open Bissau Airport in order to secure the viability of humanitarian aid as well as the return of the refugees and displaced persons. Noteworthy also is the recognition by both parties of the democratic institutions and legality.

The European Union commends the mediation efforts led jointly by the Contact Group of the Community of Portuguese-speaking Countries (CPLP) and the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), hoping that a lasting solution to the conflict in Guinea-Bissau can be reached in subsequent negotiations.

The Central and Eastern European countries and Cyprus associated with the European Union and the European Free Trade Association countries, members of the European Economic Area align themselves with the present statement.